reallocate the sugar cane are to the neighbouring sugar mills and thus the interest of the sugarcane growers is also protected.

Recently, the Government have taken the following decisions to improve the viability of the domestic industry and to make it competitive in international market:—

(i) The sugar industry has been de-licensed with effect from 11.9.1998.

(ii) The ratio of levy to freesale sugar has been changed from 40:60 to 30:70 with effect from 1.1.2000.

(iii) The imported sugar has been brought under the release mechanism with effect from 22.11.1999.

(iv) Duty on imported sugar has been raised to 60% with effect from 9.2.2000.

(v) Levy @ 30% on the stocks of imported sugar held by the importers has been imposed with effect from 17.2.2000.

(vi) Financial assistance is provided to the sugar mills on soft terms for their modernisation/rehabilitation and cane development schemes from Sugar Development Fund (SDF).

Storage Capacity of FCI Godowns

904. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is still inadequate storage capacity of FCI godowns, resulting in wheat and rice lying in the open at certain places;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to invite private investors to build godowns for such storage; and

(d) if so, the proposals in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) Food Corporation of India has a total storage capacity (owned and hired) of 24.90 million tonnes against a stock holding of 19.4 million tonnes as on 1.2.2000 which is considered to be adequate. This includes open CAP Storage to the extent of 3.3 million tonnes for wheat and paddy stocks, only.

(c) and (d) The Government is in the process of formulating a National Policy wherein private sector participation would be sought and encouraged for development of infrastructure for handling storage and transportation of foodgrains in the country.

Increase in Foodgrains Allocation to Karnataka

905. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government had sought increase in the allocation of foodgrains to the below poverty line families under PDS;

(b) if so, the details of the increase sought;

(c) the total number of below poverty line families identified by Government; and

(d) the steps, if any, taken on the request of Karnataka Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of Karnataka has sought increase in the entitlement of BPL families to 25 kgs. of foodgrains per family per month. It has been requested that the number of BPL families identified by State Government should be accepted by Government of India.

(c) and (d) Government of Karnataka has identified 65 lakh families below poverty line as reported by the State Government. Under the TPDS, identification of BPL families is done by State Government. However, for allotment of foodgrains, the overall number of BPL families identified by State Government are limited